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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3529  
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFSS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 000505

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/30/2016

TAGS: PGOV KDEM CG

SUBJECT: UDPS MEMBER ENTERS PRESIDENTIAL RACE

REF: KINSHASA 489

Classified By: PolCouns MSanderson, reasons 1.4 b/d.

¶1. (C) Eve Bazaiba, member of the UDPS Founders and so-called Director of the party (in charge of recruitment and social programs) registered March 23 as an independent presidential candidate. Her decision prompted party leader Etienne Tshisekedi to hold a meeting over the weekend with the Founders Group during which, according to Secretary General Remy Masamba, Tshisekedi denounced Bazaiba as a "traitor" and warned that anyone trying to emulate her example would likewise be expelled from the party. Masamba had told PolCouns previously that "some" party members already have registered as independent candidates for the National Assembly; he now believes that perhaps 30 have registered in Kinshasa, including possibly two other members of the Founders Group. Meanwhile, rumors are circulating that UDPS hard-liner Valentin Mbaki is also preparing to register -- probably for the presidential race -- while Masamba continues to dither over his own electoral possibilities.

¶2. (C) Comment: Bazaiba's decision makes public the rupture within the UDPS caused by Tshisekedi's adamant refusal to take part in elections or permit his followers to do so. While symbolically important -- and personally humiliating to Tshisekedi -- Bazaiba does not have the necessary stature to

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provoke a large-scale defection of UDPS party members. Should Mbaki or Masamba decide to throw their hats in the ring, however, they could be followed by more significant numbers of the quietly unhappy in the UDPS ranks. End comment.

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